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EDITORIAL NOTES

The fourth annual meeting of the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education was held in Boston on the 17th, 18th, and 19th of November. This was preceded by the first National Conference on Vocational Guidance, called under the auspices of the Boston Vocation Bureau and the Boston Chamber of Commerce. The relation which exists between vocational guidance and vocational training is so intimate that these two conferences may very well be considered as one. Together they covered four and one-half days, with programs morning, afternoon, and evening.

*THE BOSTON
CONFERENCES ON
INDUSTRIAL EDUCA-
TION AND
VOCATIONAL
GUIDANCE*

The keynote of this conference was distinctly social. There was a marked contrast to the demand which was very commonly made five years ago—the demand, coupled with criticism of existing school systems, to save our American industries. There was the same request that we fit children for the industries, but that request was coupled with the demand that we so fit them that they may make a happy entry into the industry, that they may follow it with some hope of progress, under more healthful conditions, and with some chance for ultimate success. There was the same assertion that our present schools are not giving a sufficiently good education to the rank and file of workers, and the consequent demand that the school age be advanced to sixteen years. But coupled with that was the demand that the schools be made better, more varied in purpose, and appropriate for those whom we are proposing to retain longer in school. The criticisms of the schools might well be summed up in the statements made by President-emeritus Eliot of Harvard University. Our forefathers expected, he said, that this country would have neither the very rich nor the very poor, but of course we know that there has never been a time or place showing greater extremes of poverty and riches than are exhibited now in this country. It was expected, he said, that the public schools would interest the children, and would so equip them that they would be able to adapt themselves to any work which might present itself at the close of their school life; but he said that in both these respects we had been very much disappointed, and that we found large numbers of children emerging from the schools uninterested and unprepared. This, he said, was equally true of the elementary schools, the secondary schools, and the colleges.

*CONTRAST
WITH EARLIER
POSITION*

Educators were reminded that the education which the schools furnished was only a fraction of the entire education of the human being, and were urged to recognize the relation of that part to the whole. It was also

pointed out that the schools would be required to furnish a larger and larger part of the entire education for large numbers of our children.

Thus different speakers urged the giving of vocational vision early to the children. This vision of a career was not to be confined to the professional or commercial, but was to include as well the industrial. It was said that "vocational education gives the iron backbone of general education." It was urged also that the schools give to those desiring it a real and thorough vocational education, including some participation in actual productive activity, and not simply for the most advanced, but for all classes of industry. It was pointed out that it was frequently necessary to turn out a finished and salable product in industrial schools. It was said that trade-order work was the best means of educating the pupil, because it illustrated the trade conditions and trade standards. That, of course, would apply particularly to the lower grades of industry. Another suggested modification of the schools was that some plan should be devised for giving vocational advice and of exercising vocational guidance.

The details of the plans for carrying out these different objects were discussed at some length. It was suggested that the work in the elementary grades ought to be modified, especially for the so-called laggards and for "motor-minded" children; that differentiation should be possible somewhere in the upper elementary grades, and that optional vocational courses or schools should be established in which the vocational idea should be central and strongly predominant. The advantages of part-time co-operative schools were discussed and the plans of the Cincinnati, Fitchburg, and Beverly experiments were generally commended, except by organized labor, as excellent types to be followed. The development of the continuation-school idea was recommended. That is also a part-time co-operative scheme, but it begins with the employer, rather than with the school. The employer releases his employees for a certain number of hours each week, and the public school provides a suitable training for them during those hours. And finally the evening schools were discussed. It was pointed out that these should be a part of the public-school system, but should be for men and women already at work in the trades, and not primarily for children.

It was noticeable that there was great unanimity in the opinions expressed by men of widely different experiences as to the need and value of industrial education. Manufacturers, workmen, social workers, business men, and educators took part in the discussion. It was stated that this specific and appropriate training was the need of the manufacturer and the merchant and the desire of the workman; it was the solution suggested by social workers, and it was found by educators to be the direct and logical result of the scientific study of education. From all these different sources was heard the testimony that there had been dis-

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covered a cultural value in this vocational and industrial work which was wholly unexpected and unlooked for at the beginning. Whether it was a school superintendent speaking, or a manufacturer, or a social worker, the opinion advanced was the same. Wherever the specific aim of the experimental industrial work had been accomplished it had been attended by an increase in general intelligence and general interest that was most suggestive and encouraging. There was a remarkable agreement that work itself is educative.

Considerable attention was given to the discussion of the training of teachers for this work. It was said to be absolutely essential that teachers
TRAINING OF be trained on both sides, that they have both a vocational
TEACHERS and a professional training or experience of some kind. It was pointed out that at the present time there were few teachers who could succeed in these schools, and therefore that it was necessary to secure co-operation between individuals having different experiences. It was suggested that normal-school graduates who were interested in the cause of vocational education should equip themselves by gaining some trade experience. Some have already done this, by working in shops or stores for a longer or shorter period. It was also suggested that intelligent young workmen might be given short courses in the art of teaching, as workmen will certainly be called on to teach in the new industrial schools. It was pointed out that this whole plan was in keeping with American procedure: that we always develop our machinery before our men. Industrial schools will be built and equipped and we shall then expect to develop the men to conduct them.

Five sessions were given to the conference on vocational guidance. Reports were made of plans now in operation, and of others soon to be formulated, for giving this much-needed assistance to the youth of
VOCATIONAL the land. It was astonishing to note that all the way from
GUIDANCE the lowest grade of industrial school, such as the Manhattan Trade School, for instance, to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, it was agreed that the girl or the boy emerging from school needed vocational guidance.

The discussions seemed to fall into four general groups: First, those advocating the giving of *information about* vocations in general and about the opportunities for work in the immediate vicinity, and also about opportunities for receiving vocational education. This, of course, would include the giving of suitable work in the elementary schools in order to create vocational vision, without which advice is difficult. The second group related to the *placing* of children, the assistance of the young worker when he finally decides to make the transition from school to work. At this time he needs to be shown the advisability of taking a position which offers an opportunity for advancement, even though in the beginning it may not be so attractive as some other which pays a larger initial wage. The third group related to *guidance*, the sympathetic counseling of the worker subsequent to his entry

into his new work. This is a most trying time for many a boy and girl, and attention was called to the mutual responsibility of the parent, the employer, the teacher, and the vocational assistant.

A fourth group looked to the establishment of vocation bureaus. The function of these is to collect information about opportunities for boys and girls in the trades and stores, as well as possibilities for receiving vocational training, and to classify this information in such a way that it will be available for use in placing and guiding children in suitable positions, or possibly in withholding or even withdrawing them from undesirable occupations. The opinion was generally expressed that ultimately this function should be taken over by the public schools. The Boston schools, it was stated, have now at least one vocational adviser in each of the elementary and high schools.

The program of the National Society gave two sessions to the consideration of the demands and opportunities for girls in trades and stores and to the training of teachers for girls' trade schools. The discussions were confined almost entirely to the lower grades of women's work, industrial and commercial, the needle trades, and the department stores.

On Thursday evening there was a banquet at the Somerset, at which many addresses of an inspirational nature were given. Mr. Charles H. Winslow, of Washington, D.C., representative of the American Federation of Labor, made a careful and authoritative statement of the position of organized labor on the question. He deprecated private control of public instruction, which is possible in part-time co-operative schools, criticized short-term trade courses of any kind, and declared for complete and thorough training at public expense and under public guidance. This, he says, labor demands as a right, not asks as a privilege.

One session was devoted to the subject of apprenticeship and corporation schools. The speakers represented large corporations: the General Electric Company, the Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, the Solvay Process Company, and others. When we reflect on how much of our manufactured product is the result of machine work, we see that the making of machines is of great importance as an industry. The discussions of this session related almost wholly to that industry. The impression left by this conference was that the apprenticeship system is not dead, as we have so frequently heard, but that it is transformed to meet present-day conditions; but it was shown that these conditions are such that the apprenticeship system is practicable only for very large corporations.

A session was devoted to part-time and evening schools. One of the most notable addresses of the conference was that of Superintendent Frank B. Dyer on "The Public Schools and the Apprentices of Cincinnati." He gave interesting details of the continuation schools for machinists' apprentices established under the new Ohio law. This statute is the first enacted

in this country for the compulsory continued training in day schools of children who have entered gainful occupations. Mr. Dyer said, "The apprenticeship is a day-school proposition," and this voiced the sentiment of most of those who spoke at the session.

On Thursday evening Dr. Georg Kerschensteiner, superintendent of schools, Munich, gave an illustrated lecture on "Continuation Schools of Germany." His address demonstrated the value of co-operation between the school authorities and the employers. Dr. Kerschensteiner dwelt on the efficacy of "joy in work." This he believes to be possible only when the workman is thoroughly and broadly trained.

At the last session the topic was "The Social Meaning of Industrial Education." Mr. James P. Munroe, treasurer of the Monroe Felt and Paper Company of Boston, who was subsequently elected president of the society, was chairman of the meeting. He predicted the rapid advance of industrial education in the United States during the next forty years, and maintained that the immediate industrial effect on the individual was of small consequence compared with the ultimate social result of the movement. The most notable address of this session, and in fact of the whole conference, was given by Mr. Howell Cheney, of Cheney Brothers, South Manchester, Connecticut, on "The Problem of Industrial Education as Seen by the Employer." Mr. Cheney is a large manufacturer, has been a member of the State Board of Education and of the local school committee, and is interested in the Consumers' League of Connecticut. He is deeply and unselfishly interested in matters of education. He emphasized the necessity of training the two-thirds who would not be touched by the plans commonly proposed for vocational education. He discussed the question as to whether low-grade industrial work might be made educative. He called attention to the fact that each machine process was the development of a hand process, and expressed the belief that the employment of intricate machinery and the production of the finest quality of goods might, under favorable conditions, make factory work relatively desirable. In this connection he spoke at length of the responsibility of the consumer. He was inclined to believe that little would be gained by arbitrarily advancing the compulsory school age without changing the form of school work, and assigned as the cause of lack of progress in boys and girls when first entering industrial life, the totally unrelated nature of the work that had gone before.

There seemed to be a decided shifting of emphasis on several important points. The demand was not so strong for the preservation of American industries as for the salvation of the industrial workers. The call was not so much to fit the children for the industries as to fit them to cope with unfortunate or unfavorable industrial conditions. It was suggested also that the industries ought to be fitted to the young industrial worker. Instead of the complaint that vocational training is narrow and un-American, a statement which was frequently heard five

years ago, it was pointed out that such training really makes for a broader education, that it is in fact the only possible democratic education for our country and our times. Where formerly we had been advised to postpone the selection or thought of a vocation to the latest possible moment in a pupil's life, we were counseled to provide something of vocational vision or purpose as early as might be, and were reminded of the power of the motive of a life career. And perhaps the most important of all was the change from the suggestion that we investigate the industrial schools of Germany to the demand that we study our own conditions and experiment at once with a great variety of modifications of our school systems. It was pointed out that industrial education is a supplement to, and not a substitute for, our older forms of education, and that it needs the immediate and hearty co-operation of all.

FRANK M. LEAVITT

The article on "Qualitative Elimination from High Schools" by Mr. Johnson, which appeared in the December number of the *School Review*, furnishes a suitable opportunity for acknowledging the co-operation of the school authorities of Chicago in a number of scientific investigations which would never have been possible on any large scale if the school records of Chicago had not been opened to examination. The superintendent and principals of this system have been very hospitable in entertaining propositions for study of their records. They recognize, as do all serious students of school problems, the importance of getting out of records the information which lies buried from view. It is hoped that their example may stimulate other school authorities to bring out in systematic form similar studies, so that a body of comparative material may be created. The students of education are dependent for their concrete material upon practical workers. The Department of Education at the University of Chicago is under great obligations to the city school system in the midst of which it is located.

C. H. J.